OPINION

OUR VIEW

The good cop

After a lifetime of public service, from combat in Vietnam to defending the war in Iraq, 67-year-old Colin Powell has earned the right to pursue some less-stressful endeavors.

But American foreign policy still needs a good cop.

We still need a respected and reasoned voice, not only to speak out at Cabinet meetings but also to present to the world the reasons for administration policies that might otherwise cause our nation to appear needlessly belligerent.

That's why the name most mentioned to replace Powell as secretary of state, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, is not the right person for that job. So much better would be the other speculative candidate, new U.N. Ambassador John Danforth, or anyone else without any fingerprints on the still internationally unpopular and apparently unending invasion of Iraq.

Powell's resignation, announced Monday, came a little quicker than some had expected. But, Powell said, it had long been understood in the Bush administration that he would be a one-term Cabinet member.

We can only speculate as to whether Powell was, as was often reported, so on the outs with hawks such as Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld that he felt neglected and abused. And we can only wonder if things would have gone differently if Powell had been a bit less the good soldier and resigned in protest or in contrition over the faulty intelligence that was used to justify that attack.

It would be a shame for Powell to be remembered primarily for his address to the Security Council that, while it did not win U.N. support for the Iraq invasion, did much to sell the idea at home — with information that proved to be almost entirely false. His career was so much more than that.

Powell, the child of immigrant parents from the poor streets of New York City who rose to the top of both the U.S. military ranks and the diplomatic corps was, in background and in temperament, the sort of person we wish the rest of the world thought of when it thinks of Americans.

He was quick to give the credit to others, from his parents and his childhood neighborhood to the Army to the nation as a whole. And he maintained that the kind of help he got along the way had to be given to each generation in turn, through charity, mentoring and the kind of affirmative action that finds people of great talent who might otherwise be overlooked.

Rice has a similar record of accomplishment, and her knowledge of the still-volatile Russia makes her an important asset to the president.

But, as the United States seizes rare opportunities to make peace in Palestine and order in Iraq, the nation's top diplomat must be someone with clean hands.

A test for Bennett

Just for fun, let's talk weapons of mass destruction.

The United States is trying to persuade Iran not to build nuclear weapons, and it is trying to convince North Korea not to build any more.

At the same time, however, the Pentagon wants to research new types to nuclear bombs to add to the U.S. arsenal. One is a nuclear bunker-buster that would penetrate hundreds of feet into the ground before exploding.

If you have detected a certain dissonance in this message, you are not alone. It seems unreasonable for the United States to ask other nations to forgo the nuclear arms race while it continues to try to lengthen its lead. This do-as-I-say, not-as-I-do strategy doesn't work for parents, but American policymakers seem to believe it will work in international relations.

This is not just a hypothetical debate. The lame-duck Congress must decide whether it will pay for more research into the nuclear bunker-buster. The House has voted no, the Senate is about to make up its mind, beginning with votes in the Appropriations Committee that could take place this week.

Utah has two dogs in this fight. The first is Sen. Bob Bennett, who sits on the Appropriations Committee.

The second is a whole lot of Utahns who sit downwind of the Nevada site. That is where underground explosions probably would test these new weapons if the research ever proceeds that far. Given the state's history as a downwind nuclear sacrifice zone, Utahns should be skeptical of any testing, underground included.

Bennett argues that testing is not the issue at this time, that a vote to continue researching these weapons is not a vote to test them in Nevada. Much can be done with computer simulations, and the testing question can be decided later, he says.

That sounds like whistling past the graveyard, especially when, in other contexts, the opponents of test bans have claimed that testing must resume at some time to guarantee the reliability of the nuclear arsenal. In that debate, the party line has been that computer simulations alone are not enough.

Meanwhile, a vote for nuclear bunker-busters can only be interpreted one way by the mullahs in Tehran and the loon in Pyongyang. It would mean that nuclear weapons are necessary to be a great power, or to deter a great power, and if the United States says anything else, it is lying. Actions speak louder.

Bennett says that Iran and North Korea will try to join the nuclear club regardless of what the United States does with its own testing. Frankly, he may be right.

But the only way to find out is for the United States to change policy. We know that continuing to do the same thing and expecting a different result is, well, crazy.

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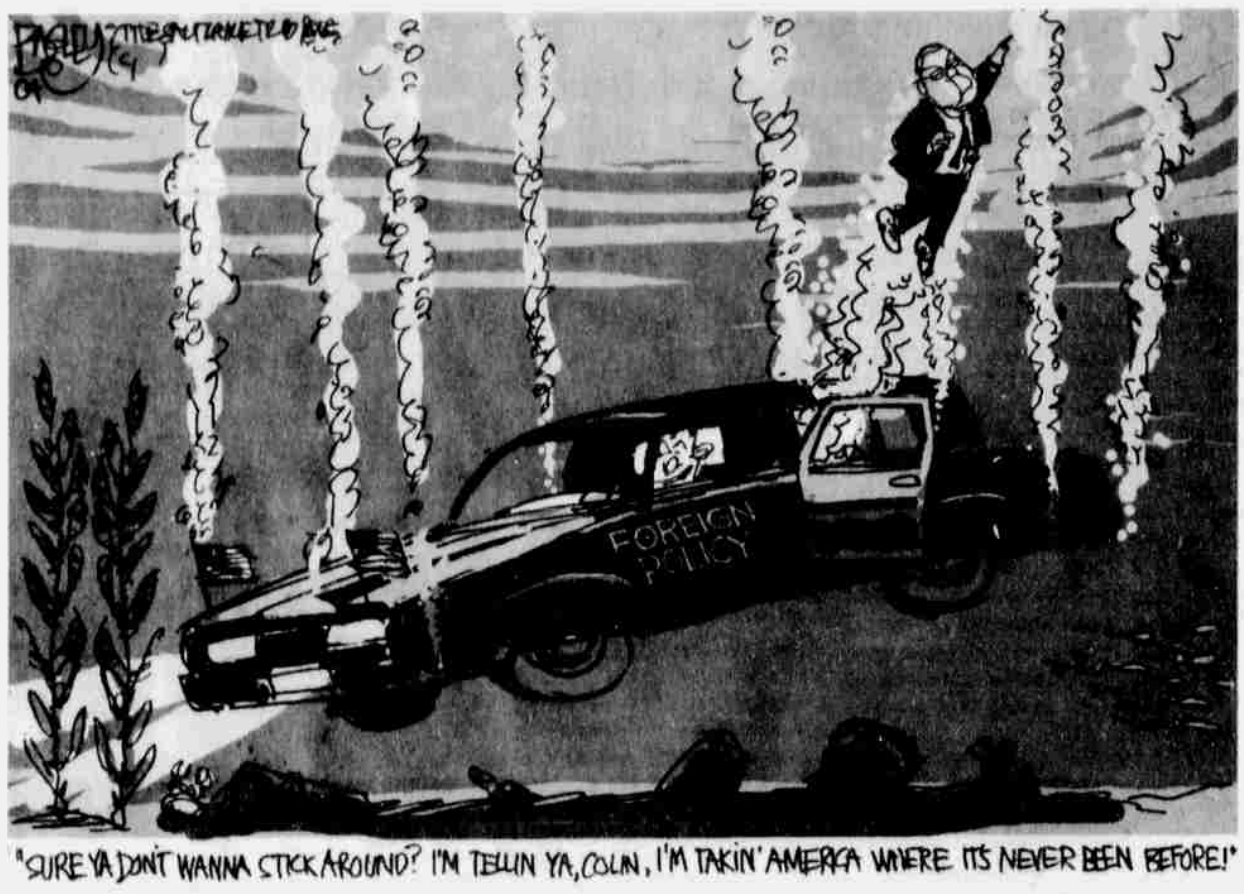

"SURE YA DON'T WANNA STICK AROUND? I'M TELLIN YA, COLIN, I'M TAKIN' AMERICA WHERE IT'S NEVER BEEN BEFORE!"

THE PUBLIC FORUM

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Listen to each other

I would like to say hoorah for Jim Stiles (*Tribune* Opinion, Nov. 14). Someone finally got the conflict between environmentalists and rural Americans just right. Everyone has spent so much time trying to label and demonize the other side, most involved in the debate have forgotten the fine art of compromise. Neither side is truly listening to the other.

As a moderate with environmentalist concerns, I sometimes get a kick out of hard-core environmentalists who still want to live in large homes and drive SUVs but don't want any oil exploration. I'm equally amused by anti-wilderness individuals who call environmentalists elitists as they drive their V-8 truck that gets nine miles a gallon with their trailer full of ATVs to spend the weekend avoiding any form of cardio.

Neither side is totally right or wrong. However, the bottom line is that no one side can totally get what they want and we all should look at our lifestyles and find ways to better utilize our finite resources.

KERRI L. ADAMS
Salt Lake City

Democrats, get to work

It is amazing to me how the 49 percent, as Mark Covington put it (Forum, Nov. 11), view life. They blame the 51 percent who voted for Bush for their loss! *The Tribune* has published numerous of these whiny letters, from what seems to be a bunch of co-dependent, dysfunctional losers. President Bush won the popular vote and the majority of the electoral votes.

Instead of whining, why not try to figure out the reasons, and make the Democratic Party more attractive to the voters? President Bush, with faults and all, was somehow more attractive to voters than Mr. Kerry, who played the whining, blame game very well. Get off your duff and get out there to make a difference for the Democratic Party so, the next time around, it may have something more appealing to offer.

Democracy is a privilege, and those who have never lived in an oppressed country certainly don't appreciate what they have — a democratic country where the majority rules. If Democrats want to be in the majority, they will have to help change the party's face. Take some responsibility. Be accountable. As a voter, I want substance, and this time George Bush did it for me! Freedom is earned, not granted on a plate.

MERLE FRENCH
Salt Lake City

Thank You, Mr. Reagan

Very recently Dewey Reagan, president of Reagan Outdoor Advertising, removed the billboard located at the Chevron station immediately adjacent to the Mount Olympus Shopping Center. This billboard has been the subject of much controversy over the past six months.

I and many area residents want to thank him for his civic-minded action. Mr. Reagan is to be congratulated for putting the interests of the community ahead of his own economic interests. Thank you, Mr. Reagan!

TOM STEPHENS
Salt Lake City

Men are victims, too

Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October) often appears to be an abuse-fest to malign and bash men. Newspaper, radio and TV coverage vilify men. Why didn't we hear about male victims?

You're not supposed to know that about two-thirds of domestic violence is physically initiated by women (especially younger women), or that college-age men are victims and end up in the emergency room for domestic violence injuries more often than their female counterparts, or that only a small percentage of injuries to women is actually the result of domestic violence. Extensive studies showing men are equal victims don't even take into account the extra abuse heaped on male victims by male-hostile "victim advocate" agencies, police, courts and various media.

See: **http://www.csulb.edu/~mfiebert/assault.htm** and **http://www.fathersforlife.org/fv/fv2.htm** and **http://www.travel-net.com/~retap/sommer.htm** and **http://www.hisside.org**. What's so awful about stopping abuse for everyone?

TOM MILLER
Smithfield

Forgetting nitpicking

This letter is in reply to Justin Davis (Forum, Nov. 14), who hates lice and tells us that, due to a new process, lice may be goners.

Oh, Justin. What is the world coming to? I am remembering back when my 7-year-old son was sent home from school with lice. Well, searching for the right shampoo in the supermarket wasn't too bad, and then making him suffer through it for three days was not fun, but then came the nitpicking. Because, at that time, shampoos did not kill the unhatched eggs, it was necessary to sit behind the kid and tediously pick out each and every louse egg, the size of — what? A dot on this page. There seemed to be hundreds of them. As you no doubt know, louse eggs are called nits.

The concern I have about your news that lice may become eliminated is this: After that nobody will understand, as I was forced to, the real impact of the word "nitpicking." Well, most people don't nowadays anyway. I just hate to see a venerable old metaphor go down the drain. Also, future kids will not get to have such a close-up and personal meeting with another species like you have had. You can tell your grandkids about it.

LINDA JARA
Salt Lake City

Stop nuclear tests

The U.S. Senate may vote soon on the Omnibus Appropriations Bill. President Bush has asked for $27.6 million for the bunker-buster nuclear bomb development and $9 million for development of other new nuclear weapons.

During previous nuclear testing, even underground tests, the levels of radioactive iodine (I-131) in mother's milk and other foods were elevated, depending on the test, well above normal in Salt Lake and all the other counties along the Wasatch front. The I-131 is concentrated in the baby's thyroid and can result in thyroid cancer. I-131 has also been associated with breast cancer.

Whereas U.S. Sens. Orrin Hatch and Bob Bennett say there won't be nuclear testing, they both voted in March 2003 to remove the ban on nuclear testing. I submit that poisoning babies through their mother's milk is a peculiar form of good family values.

Fortunately, Sen. Hatch, and especially Sen. Bennett, have a chance to reverse the threat to Utahns from fallout-related cancer; they can vote to delete the funds for nuclear testing from the Omnibus Appropriations Bill. They should vote to delete funds for nuclear testing from that bill for the sake of all of us who may otherwise die prematurely of fallout-related cancer, or, in the case of unborn children, abort or suffer severe birth defects from fallout-related in-utero child abuse.

ZELL A. MCGEE, M.D.
MEMBER, PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
Salt Lake City

Here's to our health

The post-election speeches of both Sen. John Kerry and President Bush stressed the need to bring a divided nation together. If Bush is serious about uniting this nation, many of his policies must be tempered by input from outside his base.

In the second Bush term, will his highly secretive administration, presently dominated by neo-con ideology, be more inclusive of other views on issues? Or will the political capital that Bush claims he earned in this election be spent for continued divisive dogma? Will Bush's compassion be primarily directed toward corporations and the wealthiest? Will a U.S. brand of Talibanism be encouraged by Bush's unerring divine guidance, further undermining our constitutional government?

In a recent column Thomas Friedman, possibly troubled by the election results, said he was reminded of his Grandma's probable response, one common in the days of the Great Depression: "At least I still have my health." Here's to the health of this great nation!

MILTON HOLLANDER
Salt Lake City

In our name

The election is over and the war goes on. Every day Americans and Iraqis are killed or maimed, their loved ones left in grief, their lives changed forever and all in the name of defense, of national interest, of democracy and even in the name of God — and certainly in the name of the American people.

DAVID LINDSTROM
Bountiful

POOR C